

In addition to the quality information, production figures (obtained from the Crop Estimates Committee (CEC)) relating to hectares planted, tons produced and yields obtained on a national as well as provincial basis, over an eleven season period, are provided in this report. SAGIS (South African Grain Information Service) supply and demand information is provided in table and graph format. Import and export figures over several seasons are also included.

Data on the final consignment of sorghum imported for domestic use during the period March 2019 to February 2020 is included in the report for the sake of completeness and compared to the quality of the local crop during the 2018/19 production season. To assist with quality comparisons between local and imported sorghum, the same scope of analysis is used for both sets of samples.

The national sorghum grading regulations as published in the Government Gazette of 8 January 2016 are provided as the last section of the report.

Production

Sorghum is a tropical grass grown primarily in semi-arid regions of the world. Sorghum can grow in areas too dry for maize and is deemed to be the fifth most important grain crop grown in the world (after maize, wheat, rice and barley).

World sorghum production for the 2020/21 season to date, stands at 62.1 million tons with the United States being the largest contributor (9.5 million tons). Please see Table 1a for the world sorghum trade (import and export figures) as well as production and consumption figures in Table 1b.

Table 1a: World Sorghum Trade						
October/September Trade Year, Thousand Metric Tons						
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21 Feb	2020/21 Mar
Exports						
Argentina	457	473	254	426	1 000	1 000
Australia	542	449	91	107	500	500
China	34	43	49	29	50	50
Ethiopia	75	75	75	75	75	75
India	24	123	53	31	50	50
Kenya	73	136	53	31	80	80
Nigeria	100	100	100	50	50	50
Others	402	298	235	224	170	186
Subtotal	1 707	1 697	910	973	1 975	1 991
United States	6 031	4 839	2 437	5 480	7 600	7 600
World Total	7 738	6 536	3 347	6 453	9 575	9 591
Imports						
China	5 209	4 436	652	3 709	7 600	7 600
Ethiopia	16	6	6	61	80	80
European Union	194	486	796	90	50	50
Japan	561	577	449	426	400	400
Kenya	146	141	109	52	150	150
Somalia	60	80	85	80	50	50
South Sudan	36	148	26	81	150	150
Sudan	120	150	160	150	100	100
Taiwan	48	64	70	40	50	50
Uganda	40	35	35	25	50	50
Others	881	558	963	859	371	334
Subtotal	7 311	6 681	3 351	5 573	9 051	9 014
Unaccounted	383	- 196	- 5	879	523	576
United States	44	51	1	1	1	1
World Total	7 738	6 536	3 347	6 453	9 575	9 591

Table 1b: World Sorghum Production and Consumption						
Local Marketing Years, Thousand Metric Tons						
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21 Feb	2020/21 Mar
Production						
Argentina	3 400	3 000	2 500	2 500	3 200	3 200
Australia	994	1 257	1 160	300	1 700	1 450
Bolivia	557	1 023	949	960	1 000	1 000
Brazil	1 865	2 136	2 177	2 254	2 100	2 100
Burkina	1 663	1 366	1 930	1 870	1 900	1 900
Cameroon	1 339	1 372	1 416	1 200	1 400	1 400
China	2 235	2 465	2 909	3 600	3 550	3 550
Ethiopia	4 752	4 816	4 932	5 200	5 200	5 200
European Union	632	660	753	869	1 020	1 020
India	4 568	4 803	3 480	4 772	3 850	4 740
Mali	1 394	1 394	1 470	1 500	1 500	1 500
Mexico	4 638	4 545	4 700	4 328	4 500	4 300
Niger	1 808	1 945	2 100	1 970	1 900	1 900
Nigeria	7 556	6 939	6 721	6 665	6 900	6 900
Sudan	6 466	3 743	4 953	4 000	5 000	5 000
Others	7 154	7 077	7 825	7 395	7 429	7 474
Subtotal	51 021	48 541	49 975	49 383	52 149	52 634
United States	12 199	9 192	9 271	8 673	9 474	9 474
World Total	63 220	57 733	59 246	58 056	61 623	62 108
Total Consumption						
Argentina	2 900	3 100	2 150	2 050	2 100	2 100
Bolivia	570	920	980	940	980	980
Brazil	1 700	2 100	2 200	2 200	2 200	2 200
Burkina	1 640	1 400	1 800	1 870	1 900	1 900
Cameroon	1 369	1 387	1 441	1 205	1 425	1 425
Chad	950	1 000	1 000	1 000	1 000	1 000
China	7 400	6 900	3 600	7 200	10 900	10 900
Ethiopia	4 700	4 646	4 882	5 230	5 300	5 300
European Union	790	970	1 574	953	1 072	1 072
India	4 500	4 600	3 550	4 500	3 900	4 500
Mali	1 400	1 450	1 470	1 500	1 500	1 500
Mexico	5 300	4 700	5 100	5 000	4 500	4 000
Niger	2 000	1 850	2 100	2 050	2 000	2 000
Nigeria	7 350	6 950	6 650	6 650	6 850	6 850
Sudan	5 950	4 400	4 900	4 450	4 950	4 950
Others	7 676	8 132	8 756	7 561	8 463	8 226
Subtotal	56 558	54 391	52 230	55 191	59 453	59 769
United States	6 283	4 119	6 186	4 354	2 032	2 032
World Total	62 841	58 510	58 416	59 545	61 485	61 801

Notes:

World totals for consumption reflect total utilisation, including food, seed, industrial, feed and waste, as well as differences in local marketing year imports and local marketing year exports.

Consumption statistics for regions and individual countries, however, reflect food, seed, industrial, feed and waste only.

Source: United States Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service (USDA-FAS), Grain: World Markets and Trade report, March 2021.

The local area utilised for sorghum production decreased by almost 16%, from 50 500 hectares in the 2018/19 season, to 42 500 hectares this season. However, as a result of the increased yield, the production figure is the highest since the 2013/14 season.

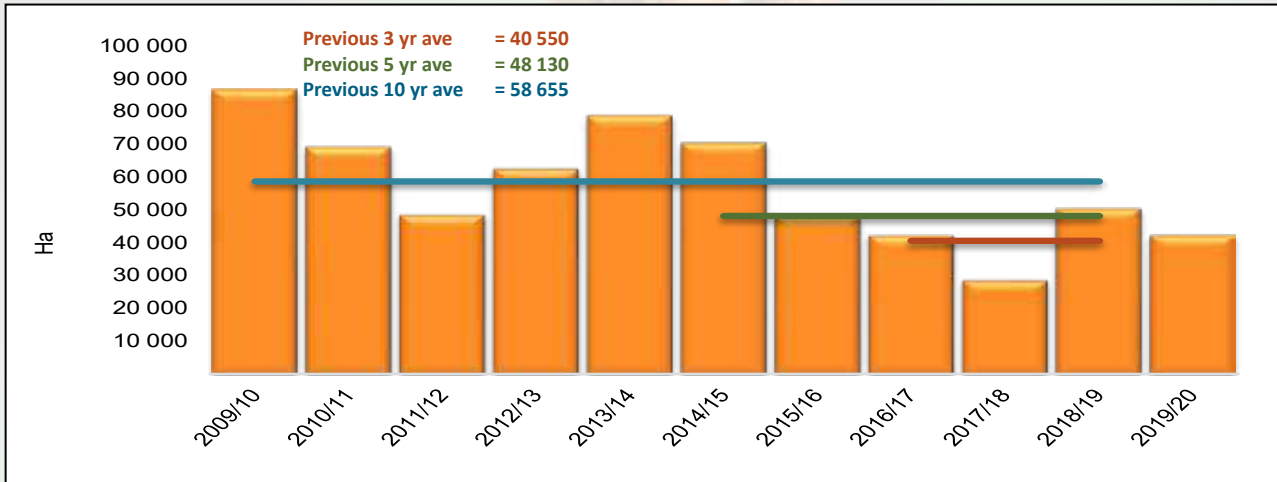
According to *The Bureau for Food and Agricultural Policy (BFAP) Baseline, Agricultural Outlook 2020 – 2029*, when looking at the outlook for field crops, specifically summer grains and oilseeds, sorghum area is projected to expand by 28%, with most of this gain being achieved over the next three years. Yields are expected to improve by 6% in the next ten years to 2029. The historic failure of sorghum yield growth to keep up with alternative crops such as yellow maize, has been one of the reasons for consistent decline in area in the past.

Please see Table 2 for an overview of sorghum production under dry land conditions versus irrigation in the 2019/20 season, compared to the 2018/19 season. Graphs 2 to 4 provide national figures with regards to hectares planted, tons produced and yields obtained over the last 11 seasons. Graphs 5 to 10 on page 6 provide similar figures for the major sorghum producing provinces this season, namely Mpumalanga, Limpopo and the Free State.

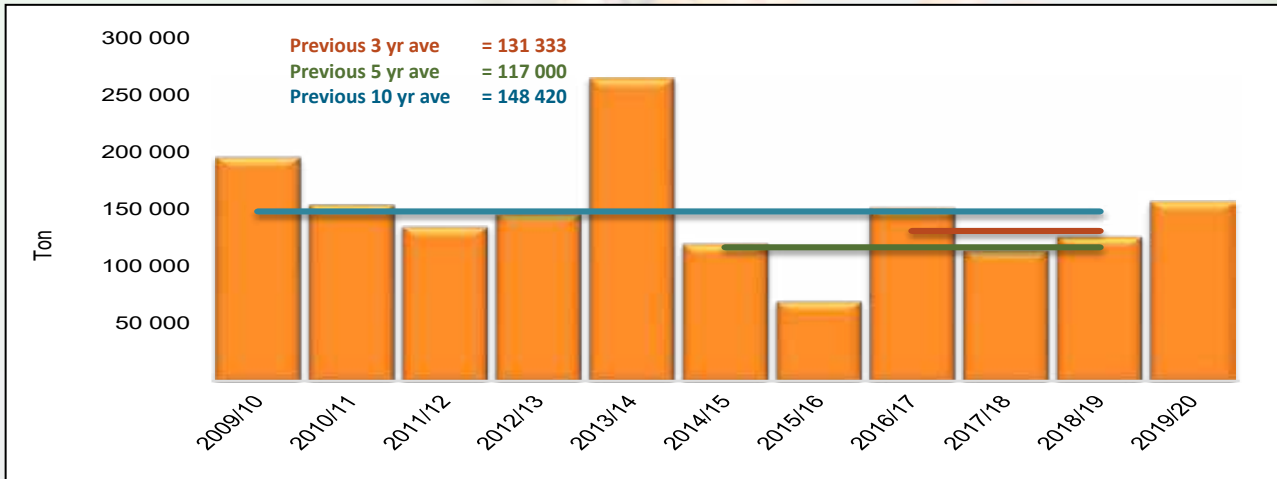
Table 2: Sorghum production overview over two seasons							
Province	Type of production	2019/20			2018/19		
		Hectares planted, ha	Production, tons	Yield, t/ha	Hectares planted, ha	Production, tons	Yield, t/ha
Western Cape	Dryland	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Irrigation	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	-	-	-	-	-	-
Northern Cape	Dryland	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Irrigation	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	-	-	-	-	-	-
Free State	Dryland	8 000	35 200	4.40	8 000	23 600	2.95
	Irrigation	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	8 000	35 200	4.40	8 000	23 600	2.95
Eastern Cape	Dryland	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Irrigation	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	-	-	-	-	-	-
KwaZulu-Natal	Dryland	1 200	4 200	3.50	500	1 500	3.00
	Irrigation	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	1 200	4 200	3.50	500	1 500	3.00
Mpumalanga	Dryland	8 500	46 340	5.45	7 500	36 000	4.80
	Irrigation	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	8 500	46 340	5.45	7 500	36 000	4.80
Limpopo	Dryland	15 350	39 350	2.56	24 650	44 625	1.81
	Irrigation	650	2 600	4.00	350	1 500	4.29
	Total	16 000	41 950	2.62	25 000	46 125	1.85
Gauteng	Dryland	265	795	3.00	1 000	3 200	3.20
	Irrigation	35	165	4.71	-	-	-
	Total	300	960	3.20	1 000	3 200	3.20
North West	Dryland	7 800	25 500	3.27	8 300	15 725	1.89
	Irrigation	700	3 850	5.50	200	850	4.25
	Total	8 500	29 350	3.45	8 500	16 575	1.95
RSA	Dryland	41 115	151 385	3.68	49 950	124 650	2.50
	Irrigation	1 385	6 615	4.78	550	2 350	4.27
	Total	42 500	158 000	3.72	50 500	127 000	2.51

Figures provided by the CEC.

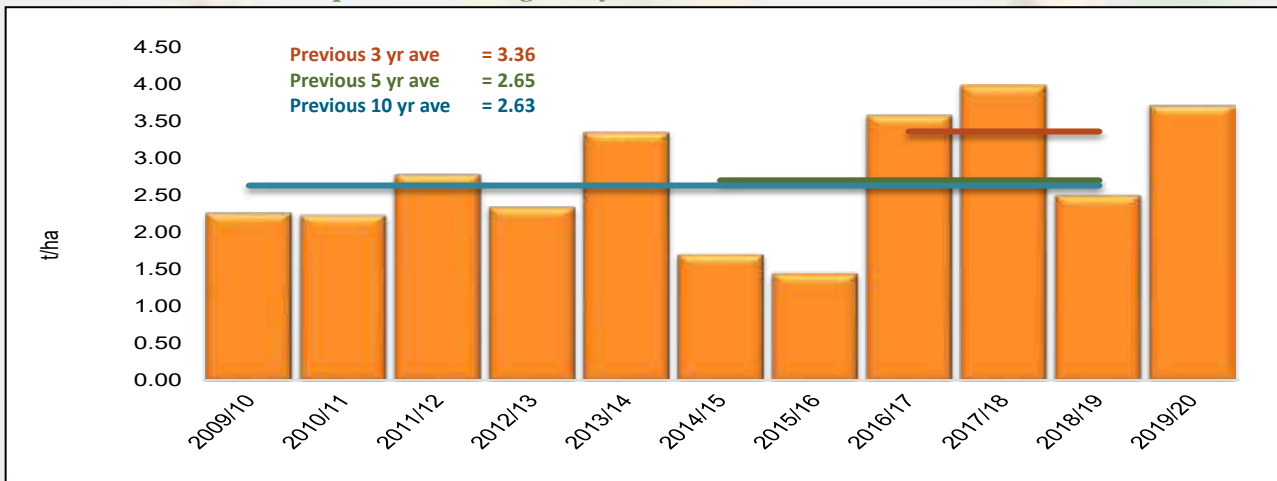
Graph 2: Total RSA area utilised for sorghum production from 2009/10 to 2019/20



Graph 3: Sorghum production in RSA from 2009/10 to 2019/20

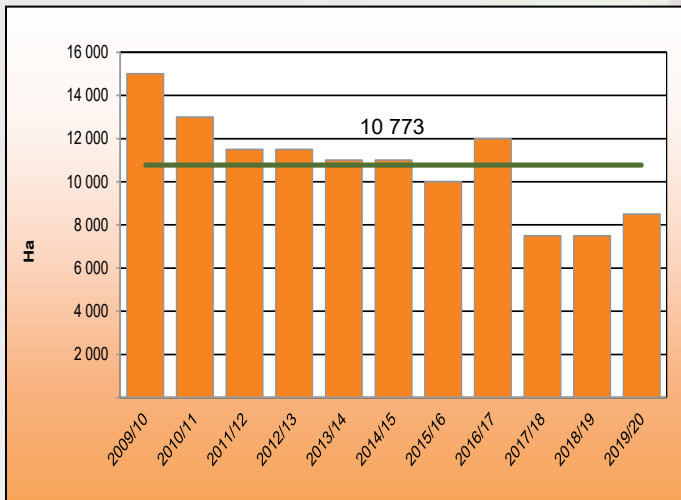


Graph 4: RSA Sorghum yield from 2009/10 to 2019/20

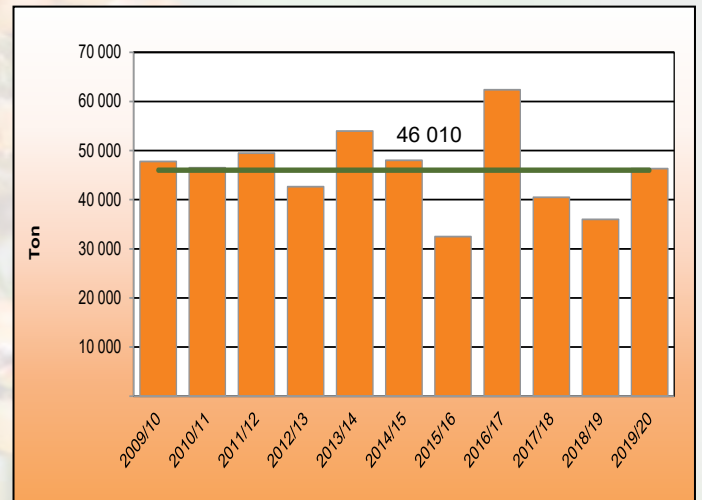


Figures provided by the CEC.

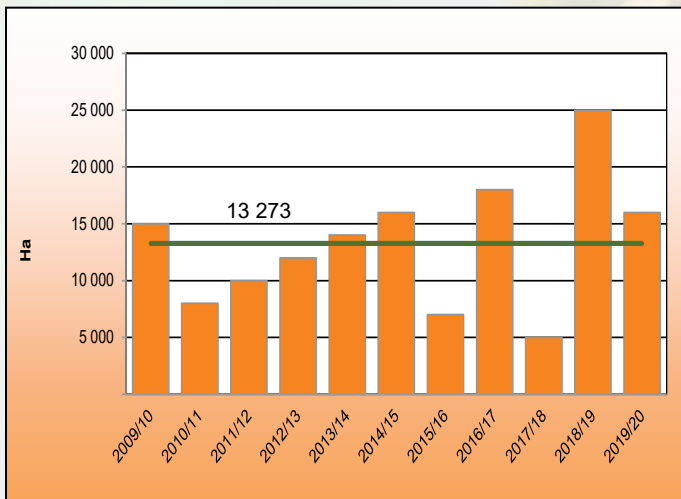
Graph 5: Area utilised for sorghum production in Mpumalanga since 2009/10



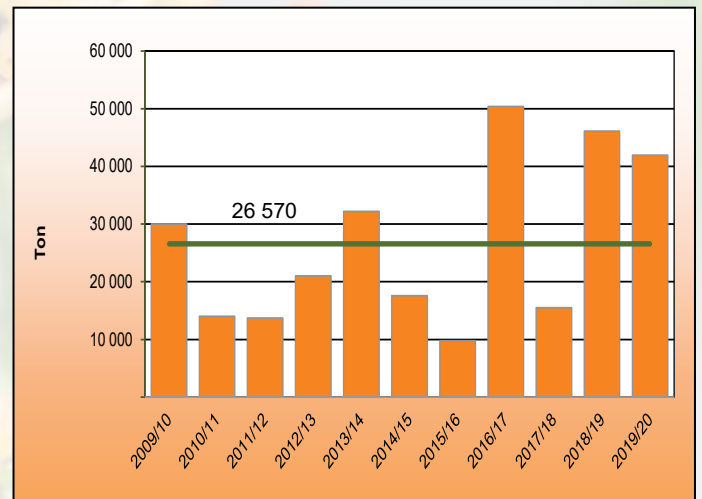
Graph 6: Sorghum production in Mpumalanga since 2009/10



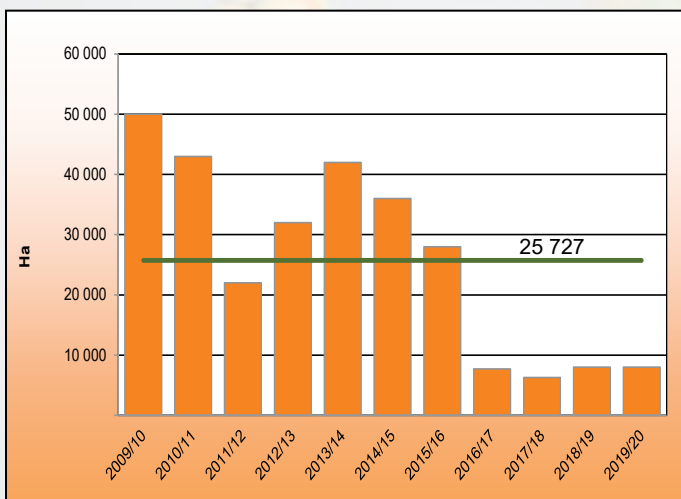
Graph 7: Area utilised for sorghum production in Limpopo since 2009/10



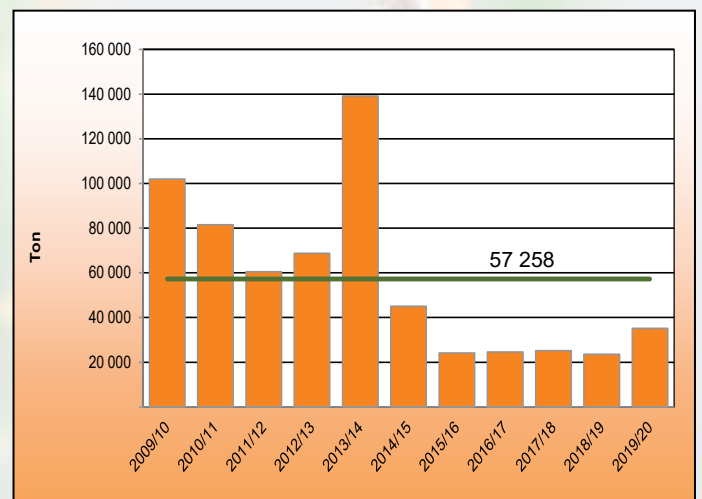
Graph 8: Sorghum production in Limpopo since 2009/10



Graph 9: Area utilised for sorghum production in Free State since 2009/10



Graph 10: Sorghum production in Free State since 2009/10



Figures provided by the CEC.

— Eleven season average